



# Montana's Public Schools, *Our State's Greatest Asset*



## Superintendent Juneau's 2013 Legislative Agenda



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Montana  
**Office of Public Instruction**  
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent



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***Montana has a lot to be proud of*** when it comes to our public education system. Our public schools score in the top ten states in the nation in reading, math and science. Our 8th graders earn the top scores in the nation in reading and science and score second-highest in math. We will continue to achieve these great outcomes if we continue to invest in our public education system.

Investing in public schools is an investment in Montana's economy and the future of our state. In order to meet the demands of today's economy, our state must work to ensure every student graduates with the skills they need to be successful adults. To meet these goals, our schools are engaging their entire communities in Graduation Matters efforts, improving the way students learn English and math and delivering quality instruction that prepares our students for the jobs of tomorrow.

Montana schools are constantly innovating to meet the needs of the 21st Century economy, and they will be even better able to innovate through strategic investment of funding.



*Superintendent Juneau and Commissioner of Higher Education Clayton Christian promoting dual credit opportunities.*

# Improving Student Achievement through Higher Standards in English and Math and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Classrooms

Superintendent Juneau is requesting a one-time-only investment of \$10 million dollars to implement Montana's new English and math standards and ensure schools have the necessary technology to support 21st Century learning for every student.

In November of 2011, the Board of Public Education adopted new, higher standards in English and math. These new standards have the potential to fundamentally transform learning in the classroom. If properly implemented, Montana students will be ready to compete not only with their peers across the country, but globally. They give every student, no matter where they live, the opportunity to receive an education that will prepare them for college and to enter the workforce.

Schools have already started aligning their local curriculum to the standards, providing training to teachers and school leaders and educating parents on the upcoming changes. Additional training as well as textbooks and materials are required to successfully implement the new, higher standards.

These new standards are a state-led, bi-partisan effort to raise the bar on student achievement. Forty-six states have adopted these higher standards, and in 2015, for the first time ever, we will be able to compare student performance across the country based on the same set of high standards. Montana is working with twenty-four other states to develop a new online testing system to measure student achievement.

Currently, the once-a-year state test results are provided to teachers and parents long after the school year is over. The new online testing system will allow

## Quick Facts

*Montana's previous English and math standards set benchmarks at grades 4, 8 and upon -graduation. The new standards provide parents, teachers and students with clear expectations of what students should learn at every grade level.*

*Leading American businesses such as Boeing, Microsoft, IBM and State Farm Insurance as well as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce support Montana's new math and English standards.*

*The U.S. Department of Labor's workforce projections for 2018 show that nine of the 10 fastest-growing occupations that require at least a bachelor's degree will require significant math or science training.*

*It is estimated that 30 million of the 46.8 million job openings in 2018 (about 64%) will require education and training beyond high school.*

*The State of Montana currently has only one funding stream solely dedicated to technology funding for schools, and that fund is limited to \$1M annually.*



teachers to assess student achievement throughout the year, rather than just a one-time test at the end of the year. This will allow teachers to identify students in need of extra support early on, and the online tests will be scored quickly to give teachers the fast results they need to inform classroom instruction.

Technology continues to deeply affect the way we work, collaborate and communicate. Increasingly, technology skills are critical to success in almost every arena, and those who are more fluent with technology will advance while those without access or skills will not. Montana educators need access to technology and training to engage students in their learning and ensure they have the 21st Century skills to be successful in today's global economy.

Montana's K-12 education system must have the necessary tools, training and resources to meet the new, higher standards in English and math and the technology needs of 21st Century classrooms. The educational success of today's students will directly impact the future economic success of our state.

## **Graduation Matters Montana: Ensuring Every Student Graduates Prepared for College and the Workforce**

*In today's global economy*, a quality education is the key to economic prosperity. As parents, educators, business owners and taxpayers, we cannot ignore the long term consequences of individuals not graduating from high school. Nearly 2,000 students drop out of Montana schools each year. We can do better.

Superintendent Juneau launched Graduation Matters Montana in 2010 and aims to cut Montana's dropout rate in half to 2.5% by 2014. Juneau is currently working with 28 schools which serve nearly 65% of Montana students to decrease the dropout rate and ensure students graduate with the skills they need to be successful adults.

By maintaining a statewide focus while working community by community, Montana can increase its graduation rate and improve student achievement.



## The Graduation Matters Legislative Agenda:



# 1

### Raise the Legal Dropout Age to “age 18 or upon graduation” SB 13, Senator Dave Wanzonried

Currently, Montana students can drop out of high school at age 16. Only 17 states in the country allow 16 year olds to drop out of high school. The last time this law was changed was 90 years ago. In today’s global economy, a high school diploma, at minimum, is necessary for students to have a chance at being successful adults. *(OPI estimates an additional 244 students each year will stay in school, \$453,000)*

# 2

### Funding for the Montana Digital Academy to Meet Increased Demand

The MTDA is providing classes to 3,712 students with 6,797 enrollments annually. In Montana’s rural schools, the MTDA is providing students with access to elective courses that have never before been available, including world languages and AP courses. In our urban schools, the credit recovery classes are allowing students who lack the necessary credits to graduate to catch up with their peers, increasing graduation rates in our largest school districts. With the increasing demand for these courses from Montana students, it is expected the MTDA will grow to 10,000 enrollments annually by 2015. *(\$745,384 and \$783,219 or \$1.5M increase from base of \$2.3M)*

# 3

### Provide Funding for Educating 19-Year Olds SB 14, Senator Dave Wanzonried

Some students need an additional year to finish their high school diploma; however, schools do not receive any funding to educate 19-year-olds. Montana needs to update this law to reflect the cost of keeping students in school and ensure they graduate. *(\$861,000, 110 students per year)*

## The Economic Cost of Dropouts

*On average, high school dropouts nationwide earn \$9,200 less per year than high school graduates and about one million dollars less over a lifetime than college graduates.*

*According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, the lost lifetime earnings in Montana from dropouts this year alone total nearly \$830 million. The economy of Montana would see a combination of crime-related savings and additional revenue of about \$19.6 million each year if the male high school graduation rate increased by just five percent.*

*High school dropouts make up 75% of incarcerated men and women in Montana.*

*Workers who did not graduate from high school have an unemployment rate that is twice as high as someone who has a high school diploma. Nearly 30% of Montana’s high school dropouts meet the federal definition of low-income, which is twice the rate of high school graduates.*

# 4

## **Boosting College-Readiness and Improving College Access and Affordability**

### **HB 85, Representative Edie McClafferty**

High school students who take college-level courses are more likely to graduate, enter college, and stay in college. The credits earned in high school from Montana's colleges and universities are transferable to any Montana institution of higher education. In 2011, the average debt owed by Montana students who graduated with student loans was \$23,894. Montana currently ranks 37th in the nation and last in the western states for the percentage of 15-17 year olds taking at least one college course. *(The OPI requests \$600,000 for tuition and fee waivers for students, \$250,000 for regional career coaching services for high school students, and \$150,000 to increase the number of high school teachers certified to teach college level courses.)*



# 5

## **Invest in Career and Technical Education Student Programs**

### **HB 86, Representative Jesse O'Hara**

Montana's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Student Organizations currently serve 6,287 students. Students who participate in organizations such as FFA, BPA, HOSA, and FCCLA gain valuable leadership experience and skills they can use in the workforce and higher education. Additionally, students who take three or more CTE courses have a graduation rate of 96.2 percent. *(The OPI requests \$1M to support CTE Student programs.)*

## **Ensuring Montana Schools have the Resources they Need to Stay at the Top of the Nation**

Montana's public schools are one of our state's greatest assets. We have high-quality teachers, bright students and strong community support for our schools. Because of Montana's commitment to providing every student with a quality public education, our schools are producing results. We continue to score in the top 10 states in the nation in reading, math and science. Additionally, Montana is increasing the number of citizens with a college degree by more than any other state. The 21st Century economy is demanding more from our schools and our students, and Montana's investments in public education are paying off. We will continue to improve student achievement and ensure our students are prepared for college and the workforce if we continue to support a quality public education for every Montana student.

# 1

## **Supporting K-12 Statutory Budget Increases SB 42, Senator Robyn Driscoll**

The statutory inflation-related adjustment to the basic and per-ANB entitlements is 0.89% in 2014 and 2.08% in 2015. The inflationary increases are currently included in Governor Bullock's proposed budget. Additionally, Supt. Juneau is requesting statutory increases for the quality educator payment, Indian Education for All payment and the American Indian achievement gap payment. These inflationary adjustments will help schools address cost increases in their general

operating budgets including staff compensation, health insurance premiums, utilities, and instructional materials. The funding will allow schools to recruit and retain qualified staff and to provide instructional supports for students to reach high academic expectations. Superintendent Juneau supports the increases included in the Governor's budget and opposes any efforts to cut current funding for K-12 education. *(The OPI requests \$48M for statutory increases in the basic and per-ANB entitlements in the 2015 biennium, and \$1.76M for increases in the quality educator payment, Indian Education payment, and the American Indian achievement gap payment.)*



*Superintendent Juneau and Helena Superintendent Kent Kultgen celebrate three librarians who achieved National Board Certification.*

# 2

## **Increasing the Basic Entitlement to Improve Fairness in the School Funding Formula SB 42, Senator Robyn Driscoll**

The basic entitlement payment for school districts is one of the building blocks of school funding. Each school district (elementary, middle school, and high school) gets one basic entitlement payment from the state. You can think of this as one brick per district. Currently, a rural elementary school district with one K-12 building gets the same payment as our largest school district, Billings who has 22 school buildings in its elementary district. They each get one brick. Superintendent Juneau supports improving the fairness of our funding formula by providing each school building in a district with a basic entitlement payment or "brick". *(OPI requests \$6.67M for the 2015 biennium to provide a basic entitlement for each elementary, middle school and high school program in a school district.)*

# 3

## **Property Tax Relief through Increased Transportation Reimbursements SB 25, Senator Greg Jergeson**

School district budgets for pupil transportation increased by 46% from \$59.3 million in 2004 to \$86.8 million in 2012 due primarily to increases in fuel prices over the past eight years.



Two percent of the increased transportation costs from 2004 to 2012 was paid from state sources, and 98% was paid from county and local sources. Supt. Juneau proposes to use the oil and gas revenue from school districts placed in the guarantee account to cover an increase in school transportation reimbursements and provide property tax relief to local taxpayers. *(OPI requests \$18M for the 2015 biennium to increase the state reimbursements for pupil transportation, which will provide \$18M of property tax relief.)*



*The Office of the Superintendent welcomes your questions. Please contact Chief of Staff Madalyn Quinlan at [mquinlan@mt.gov](mailto:mquinlan@mt.gov) or Communications Director Allyson Hagen at [ahagen2@mt.gov](mailto:ahagen2@mt.gov).*